



Developing a Comprehensive, Web-Based Information Resource to Monitor Cancer Incidence

Public Health Problem

In 2002, cancer killed an estimated 12,300 people in Missouri, and another 28,600 new cases of cancer were diagnosed in the state. The burden of cancer is not the same for all communities, which means that programs must be tailored to address problems where they exist, using appropriate strategies to target specific communities.

Evidence That Prevention Works

Complete, timely, and high-quality data are essential for conducting research and responding to public concerns about cancer incidence in their communities. This information helps identify cancer patterns among various populations and determines whether prevention measures and screening make a difference.

Program Example

The Missouri Cancer Registry, in collaboration with the state's Center for Health Information Management and Evaluation, developed a unique cancer information resource for citizens, health professionals, researchers, and policy makers: Missouri Information for Community Assessment (MICA). MICA is an innovative Web-based system that allows users to access health information, including cancer statistics from the state cancer registry and health risk factor information from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. The cancer MICA system allows users to create tables showing cancer incidence by year, age, sex, race, cancer site, cancer stage, cancer grade, and the geographic location of cancer patients at the county level. This user-specific information can then be downloaded to other applications to produce maps, charts, or graphs so people can understand the overall effect that cancer has on the state.

Implications

The availability of high-quality cancer registry data and information about health behaviors and risk factors is essential to identifying and monitoring trends in cancer incidence and deaths. This type of information also is critical to researching, planning, and evaluating cancer prevention and control efforts. Missouri's MICA is a new way of providing partners and the public with information about cancer and its associated risk factors. The MICA Web-based system can serve as a model for other states as an effective way to provide and encourage the use of data collected through the state's central cancer registry and to integrate cancer-related data into health planning activities.

Contact Information

Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
P.O. Box 570 • Jefferson City, Missouri 65102
Phone: (573) 522-2880 • Web site: www.dhss.state.mo.us